ANTIQUARIAN NOTES:

MAINLY OF MEN AND MATTERS

CONNECTED WITH THE

CHURCHES

ON THE ROLL OF THE

NATIONAL CONFERENCE.

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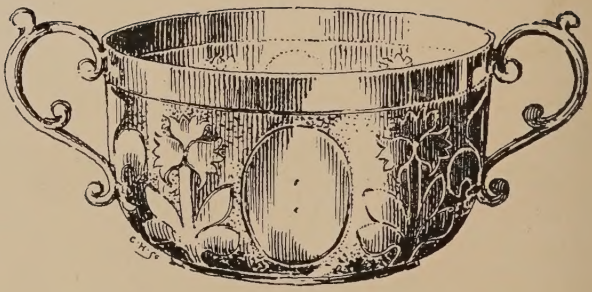

COMMUNION CUP,

A.D. 1641.

PLATT CHAPEL, MANCHESTER.

ANTIQUARIAN NOTES.

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An Interesting Cup.

The rare and charming little Charles I. porringer here pictured dates from 1641, and forms part of the communion plate owned by the congregation of Unitarian and other Christian people worshipping in Platt Chapel, Manchester. It was made by T. Maunday, is 2⅜ in. in height, and 4¼ in. in diameter. Illustrated first in 1897, in "Vestiges of Protestant Dissent," it again figures in the current issue of *The Magazine of Fine Arts*, in an article on "Some Old Silver Communion Plate of English Nonconformity," from the skilled pen of E. Alfred Jones. In "Vestiges" the porringer is described as of "bold ornamentation,

burnished on finely-punched ground, consisting of an oval medallion in centre, on each side of this a plant with 4 radial leaves, a stiff upright stalk with 3 conventional bell-like flowers, semi-petalous; following the flowers, and dividing the two sides of the chalice, are elegantly designed *fleurs-de-lis*, the lower parts of the handles are attached to the chalice in the centre of the *fleurs-de-lis*."

It is said, probably with truth, that this porringer was formerly an article of domestic use in the Birch family, which figured very prominently in the Great Civil Wars of the 17th century; that it passed to Birch Chapel—which was erected by members of the family, and was one of the chapels-of-ease to the Manchester Collegiate Chapel—and so with the Rev. Henry Finch, on his ejection from Birch Chapel, in 1697, to Platt Chapel, of which he was the first minister from 1700 to the 13th November, 1704, the day of his death. The congregation likewise owns a second silver porringer, made in 1660, and inscribed "A.I." between the handles. Our illustration is from a drawing by Geo. H. Burgess.

Dr. Daniel Jones's Fund.

Daniel Hughes Jones (d. 22nd August, 1866) was a Cardiganshire man, born in the village of Ystrad, in the Vale of Aeron, being, it is said, the illegitimate son of a poor widow.

"His early education," writes Walter D. Jeremy, M.A.,* "must have been of a very elementary kind, but he had the good fortune to attract the notice of an opulent neighbour, who encouraged and assisted him, and he was sent as a pupil to the Rev. D. Davis of Castle Howell, whose school was one of the best in South Wales. Whilst he was still a youth his kind patron died, but having been started in his course he persevered in it, and was at the age of twenty-two admitted a student [1803-6] of York College, as an exhibitioner of the Presbyterian Board." Amongst the seven other men admitted to York at that period, two were also Welshmen—John Jones (d. 1813), born near Gellionen, nephew of the Rev. Roger Howell of Beckington; tutor in the family of Mrs. Geo. Cadogan Morgan,†

* "Presbyterian Fund," 1885, p. 72.

† Geo. Cadogan Morgan (1754—1798), min. Octagon Chapel, Norwich (1776-85), and Filby, with Great Yarmouth (1785-87), schoolmaster at Southgate (1787—1798), m. Ann, dau. of William Hurry, of Great Yarmouth: they had issue, Sarah, George, Richard Price, Wm. Ashburner, Edward, and four other sons, one being posthumous. Ann's sister, Priscilla Hurry, m. the Rev. Michael Maurice, Unitarian min., their son being the Rev. Frederick Denison Maurice. Another sister m. Dr. Alderson, and had issue Amelia Opie.

widow of a nephew of Dr. Richard Price; and Unitarian minister at Belper (1806-7), and Plymouth (1807-13): John Lewis, born in Cardiganshire—elder brother of Lewis Lewis (d. 1870), Unitarian minister at Dorchester (1816-36), Gateacre (1846-48), &c.—who died while a student at York.‡

Shortly after leaving York, in 1806, he succeeded his fellow-student John Jones as the tutor in Mrs. Morgan's family. He established a school at Halifax, which for a time was fairly prosperous. In 1811 he obtained a highly lucrative post as travelling tutor and companion of a gentleman of fortune. By the death of this gentleman, in the autumn of 1812, he not only became entitled to an annuity of £100, or £150, but also received a legacy of £1,000.

He next had for a time an engagement in the bookselling and publishing firm of Owen Rees—Longman, Rees, Orme & Co., in Pall Mall. He then went abroad, and was at Paris at the time of Napoleon's return from Elba. Then for four years he was tutor in the family of Mr. John Chatfield, an eminent timber merchant.

In 1819 or 1820 he was again in Paris, and while there caught an intermittent fever, from the effects of which he long suffered. He was, about the year 1820,

‡ *John Lewis of Cardiganshire, student in Dissenting College, York, æt. 23, bur. 26 March, 1805;* so entered in the register of St. Saviour Gate, York, by the college tutor, the Rev. Charles Wellbeloved.

living in the neighbourhood of London, and had married a widow lady.

He never entered on the duties of an active ministry. He was a personal friend of the Rev. Henry Davies, LL.D., and visited him at Taunton. The latter years of his life were passed at Park Place, Milton next Gravesend, and here he died; his wife and step-daughter survived him.‖

He is described§ as "LL.D., Glasgow?" In 1847, he was staying at Aberayron,* in co. Cardigan, not far from his native parish. Hearing that the Rev. John James, Unitarian minister of Gellionen, his *quondam schoolfellow at Castle Howel*,† was visiting Ystrad, he writes to him on the 3rd July, asking Mr. James to come along and see him at Aberayron, *after an interval of so many years.* Then he goes on to say:—*I might perhaps impart to you in perfect confidence, some information on a subject dear both to you as well as to myself, and a little*

‖ Cf. *Collectanea Hunteriana;* Additional MSS., British Museum, 24,459; extracts were printed in *Inquirer*, 1869, var. pp. For particulars of the "Hunter" papers see *Christian Reformer*, 1863, pp. 596—600.

§ Roll of Students, 1786—1867.

* His sister Margaret (d. 4 Dec., 1853, æt. 83) lived at Aberayron; she m. Thomas Williams, Union, Ystrad.

† All quotations in italics are, unless otherwise stated, taken from original letters *penes* the Rev. Rees J. Jones, M.A., Aberdâr, who has lent me some 200 from his collection, most of which I have copied *in extenso*. They form a series, at once unique and valuable. It is to be hoped that, as they deal mainly with South Wales Unitarian men and matters, from 1806 to 1886, the originals may find their final resting place in the Welsh National Library, Aberystwyth.—G.E.E.

private conversation with you might be likewise of some guide to me on the business in question.

Mr. James went to Aberayron and met Dr. Daniel Jones, with whom he had a *brief interview*, when Dr. Jones *hinted* to him his *intention of making a bequest in favour of the York, now Manchester, New College; also to give an equal sum upon trust in behalf of the Unitarian Academy at Caermarthen; that the income or dividends arising from the legacies should not commence until 12 months next after the decease of three lives, namely myself* [Dr. Jones], *my wife and my daughter; and that the amount of the bequest would be considerable, and be invested in Government Funds or Stocks, so as to be a permanent yearly income for the benefit of two Unitarian Institutions.*

With this intimation of his old schoolfellow's generous intentions Mr. James returned to his Glamorganshire home.

Six years pass away, and in 1853, on the 1st July, Dr. Jones again writes to Mr. James, this time from his home, *24 Park Place, Milton next Gravesend.* He reminds Mr. James of what he *hinted* at Aberayron, and tells him that, in addition to the bequests then named, he likewise intends to give a portion of available property *for the purpose of aiding in the elementary education of a limited number of boys, the children of poor parents in the parish of Ystrad,*‡ *and also to bequeathe a*

‡ The particulars relating to this part of his bequest will be dealt with in a separate article.

yearly sum in aid of salary to the minister for the time being of the Unitarian Chapel, built, if my memory fails me not, at or near Rhydygwin, in the parish of Llanfihangel Ystrad. Then he proceeds to ask of Mr. James his *opinion and advice in this business*, saying further, *because I shall be greatly influenced by your superior judgment, from your long knowledge of the locality, and of the most likely method to promote the cause of Unitarian principles in South Wales. . . You will greatly oblige me by giving every needful information you can on this question. I know little or nothing of the present state of affairs at the Carmarthen Academy; not even the names of the Tutors, except Mr. Lloyd, who I understand is the son* [deleted, and "nephew" written over it] *of our departed friend Dr. Charles Lloyd, of Coedlanney... Finding my health and strength gradually declining, I am anxious to arrange my little affairs without delay. . . . Let the subject of this letter be private, except to such in whom you can place every confidence.*

With such an important affair entrusted to him; with permission to consult men in whom every confidence could be placed; with the knowledge that upon the advice to be given to Dr. Jones practically depended the bequest of an annual income to the Presbyterian College, it might naturally be expected that Mr. James would at once consult a few of his trusty fellow-ministers and take them into his confidence, and hear their opinions. He might have communicated with

Dr. Lloyd, the College principal; with the Rev. John Jones, who from 1833 had been minister at Aberdâr with the Rev. John Edward Jones, from 1821 minister at Bridgend, and then editor of *Yr Ymofynydd;* with the Rev. Owen Evans, from 1837 minister at Cefn Coed; with the Revs. Titus Evans at Caermarthen, Thomas Thomas at Pantydefaid, and Geo. Browne Brock at Swansea; all interested men, whom he met at Quarterly Meetings and elsewhere.

What course, however, did he take? Practically to answer the letter by return of the post, and without consulting anyone; and this is what he wrote:—

> *The Caermarthen Academy has long ceased to be as useful to the cause of truth among the Unitarians as it was when we were both refused admittance, on account of our supposed heretical Unitarian sentiments. Since Dr. Davison's connexion* [1847] *with the Academy, many alterations have taken place, most of which have been unfavourable to Unitarianism in Wales. The salary of the students has been reduced to £10, from £20 a year, which renders it impossible to them to maintain themselves, without considerable aid from somewhere else, and the poor can have but little assistance.*
>
> *Theology has ceased to be taught there systematically, as well as Ethics,* [because] *these, with other causes drove more of the students to the Church of England,*‖

‖ At least nine students who left the College during 1835-47 had conformed before 1853.—Note from Principal W. J. Evans, M.A., to Editor.

than to the rank of Welsh Unitarian ministers, who are now very much wanted, but not to be had. I would immediately resign (being in my 75th year) if a successor could be found.§

. . . . *Soon after Mr. Davison became connected with the Academy, after the death* [1825] *of Dr. Abraham Rees, he proposed (as I was informed) to the London Board, the removal of the Academy from Wales, but he failed to prevail on the Board at that time; and I have been privately informed that there exists now an intention of that kind, but that it has not originated from Davison at this time; but of this intention I am not sure of the truth—time only will tell.*

In connection with the question of the removal of the Academy from Wales, the following quotation is of interest, being taken from a lengthy letter addressed, on the 18th March, 1835, to the Rev. John James, by

§ Every one of the Welsh Unitarian pulpits in South Wales, in 1853, was filled, most of them having resident ministers, all being regularly supplied. Here is the list as given on pp. 33-4 of The Unitarian Almanac for that year:—Aberdare, John Jones; Alltyplaca, David Evans, B.A.; Bettws, John E. Jones; Blaengwrach, David Jones; Bridgend, John E. Jones; Caermarthen, David Lloyd, LL.D.; Caeronen, Thos. J. Griffiths; Capel-y-groes, Rees Davies; Cefn, Merthyr, Owen Evans; Ciliau Aeron, Thos. J. Griffiths; Clydach, near Swansea, David Jones; Cribin, Thos. J. Griffiths; Cwmmardu, Titus Evans; Foxhole, near Swansea, David Jones; Gellionen, John James; Gelly, David Lloyd, LL.D., and students of Pres. Coll.; Llansyliog, John Davies; Llandyssul, John Thomas; Llwynrhydowen, John Davies; Nottage, Titus Lloyd; Onenfawr, Titus Evans; Panteg, David Lloyd, LL.D., and students; Pantydefaid, Thomas Thomas; Penrhiw, John Davies; Rhydyparc, Titus Evans; Tredegar, Thomas Davies; Wick, Titus Lloyd; Ystrad (Rhydygwin), Rees Davies. Of these men, all, save two, were *alumni* of the Presbyterian College.—G.E.E.

the Rev. Thos. Rees, LL.D., F.S.A., secretary (1825-53) to the Presbyterian Board. After telling him that the Rev. James Yates, M.A., F.R.S., and James Gibson, Esquire, were about to visit the Academy, as a deputation from the Board, Dr. Rees goes on to say that whilst they are at Caermarthen they will, under the instruction of the Board, have to carry their attention *to the general circumstances of the Academy, to its actual condition, and future prospects. . . . For several years past, I may say since the commencement* [1825] *of his acquaintance with the institution, Mr. Davison has entertained the strongest prejudice against the Welsh Academy, and has on several occasions endeavoured to prevail upon the Board to discontinue and suppress it altogether; and hitherto I have been able to carry with me the judgment of the managers in disregarding his proposal. . . . The Board have for the last four months held repeated meetings. . . . In these discussions Mr. Davison would have renewed his proposal for the utter extinction of the Academy, but that the Board had before resolved that it was expedient to maintain an institution of the kind in Wales. So much having been settled, he has now shifted his ground, and his present scheme is that the Academy shall be upon a greatly reduced scale, and more restricted in its objects.*

What was the answer given by Dr. Daniel Jones to John James on receipt of his statements? He loses no time. Replying to it on the 8th July he says:—

Your information relative to the Carmarthen Academy is altogether new to me, and the plan upon which it is conducted appears to me not very encouraging to the cause of liberal opinions in South Wales. Looking at the "reduced exhibition of £10 per an. only"! to the young men intended for the ministry, and moreover to the possible removal hereafter of the Academy from Wales, will perhaps materially alter my previous intention of leaving some property to that Academy, expressley to promote Unitarian views of religion in the Principality. Under these circumstances perhaps it would be adviceable to enlarge the charity at Ystrad, say to twice the amount or so which I intended . . . In this event I should make no bequest in favour of the Academy. Still, your opinion on the matter would be thankfully received.

By return of the post John James thus replies:—

Finding that you have received my last, I will write a word more respecting the present state of Unitarianism in Wales. The Unitarians here labour under want of ministers; as self-taught or untaught ministers do not rise among us, and could not be useful if they did; and we had not one new convert from among the Calvinistic students ever since the present plan of conducting the Carmarthen Academy took place, under an Unitarian principal.

You may remember that about 39 years ago the late Mr. Davis of Neath, the son of our old master, D. Davis,

of Castell Howel, proposed in conjunction with me, to educate 3 or 4 young men for the ministry in Wales; and for that purpose our late friend D. J. Rees promised to pay £25 per an., but the proposal was not carried into effect, though it had some influence in removing me to Glamorganshire. Unless something of that kind take place ere long, the Welsh Unitarian congregations will be left without ministers.

Ten days later, and apparently without having, in that time, received a letter from Dr. Daniel Jones, John James again writes to him :—

The great desideratum of the Welch Unitarians now appears to me to be an institution for educating 2 young men annually for the ministry in Wales, since the Caermarthen College seems to have ceased to be of any benefit to Welch Unitarianism.

Dr. Daniel Jones took time to consider matters, and does not reply to John James until the 8th September. He makes no allusion whatever to the suggestion about starting a new institution.

I am desirous to do what little good I can towards promoting free enquiry and liberal opinions in my native country, and with your judicious and timely co-operation our united efforts may, I trust, eventually better secure this object so dear to us both.

Before John James replies, on the 8th October, he has *been in Cardiganshire, and at the Quarterly Meeting at*

St. Clears, which was held the day before yesterday. This was the first meeting of the ministers since the correspondence began on the 1st July, when Dr. Daniel Jones had unfolded his scheme on paper, and sought the advice of John James and *such in whom you can place every confidenee.* Here then was his opportunity of consulting the trusted leaders of the body in South Wales, as to the proposed generous bequest to the College at which most of them had been educated. The Rev. David Beynon (æt. 57) presided over the meeting; John Jones (æt. 51), Aberdâr, and John E. Jones (æt. 52), Bridgend, both took part in the services; John James preached, and so did Thomas Thomas. Were not these the very men in whom *every confidence* could be placed? All that John James did was—to quote further from his letter of the 8th October—to consult *some of my Cardiganshire friends to give the names of two persons who are not very far from Ystrad, and in my opinion the most proper persons to be appointed trustees of bequests in favour of "free enquiry and liberal opinions," one a minister, the other a layman,* to wit—*Thomas Thomas, minister of Pantdefaid,* and *Thomas Hughes, Esq., of Neuadd Fawr. They have both given their consent to be named.* Not one word as to any opinion from the brethren as to the proposed handsome benefaction to their *alma mater!*

In his reply to John James, dated the 21st October,

after dealing with technical matters pertaining to bequests in general, and stating *that a layman would probably be the more eligible for the Welsh trust*, Dr. Daniel Jones says:—

> *Probably I should not be in the position in which I am now, if I had not received the advantages which the York Academy offered to me at the time when I was destitute of funds necessary to procure the information which I there obtained.*

To this, on the 27th October, John James gives answer:—

> *In expressing your obligation to the Manchester College, you necessarily brought to my mind the circumstances of our admittance to the Caermarthen College being refused on account of our suspected Unitarianism; and it appears to me that your donation would be best applied to the support of young men in our then condition.*

With Dr. Daniel Jones's reply to this letter from John James, not written, however, owing to *very feeble state of health*, until the first June, 1854, the correspondence closes. After saying that he appropriates £40 yearly towards educating a limited number of boys, the children of poor parents, at Ystrad, and £10 yearly in aid of salary to the Unitarian minister of Rhydygwin Chapel, Dr. Daniel Jones proceeds:—

> *The largest portion of the yearly income accruing*

from the funded property is left to aid candidates for the ministry, being destitute of sufficient funds for the purpose, and similarly circumstanced to ourselves when rejected admission to the Caermarthen Academy. . . . . My instructions were given to Mr. Busk to frame my will upon liberal, disinterested, and unbiassed principles, and when the present trustees die, a clause is introduced that their successors are to be laymen, not dissenting ministers.*

(To be continued, and to include a note on the subject from Principal W. J. Evans, M.A.).

Samuel Basnet, Coventry.

Amongst the State Papers for the year 1658 is a "petition," dated the 4th November, from "a gathered church in Coventry, where Samuel Basnet is teaching elder." It is addressed to "the Protector," *i.e.*, Richard Cromwell, who is told by the petitioners that "we are destitute of a public meeting house, and obliged to worship in a private house, which is injurious to us, and incongruous to the liberty of religion maintained by your late father,—the father of his country, the nursing father of the church,—and continued by you. In the remoter parts of the city, Bablack church, belonging to

* Revs. John Kenrick, James Martineau, John James Tayler, and Robert Needham Philips, Esqre.

the corporation, but not a parish church, stands vacant all the year, except the 1st May. We beg that we may use it for worship, and that the corporation, who have always repaired it, may do the needful repairs."

Basnet was a native of Coventry, and his father had been Mayor. "When Dr. Bryan and Dr. Grew were settled in this city, a small number of people here being congregational, chose him for their pastor. He administered the Lord's Supper to them, distinct from the rest, but preached to them as lecturer once on the Lord's Day at St. Michael's, and on a week day at Trinity church; and lived with those other worthy men in much amity and peace."—*Calamy, Palmer, ii., p. 486.*

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